

LESSON 8

Verbal Adjectives Ending in -ΤΈΟΣ, -ΤΈα, -ΤΈον

8.1. Formation of Verbal Adjectives Ending in -ΤΈΟΣ, -ΤΈα, -ΤΈον

According to Palmer (1980), the verbal adjectival suffix -τέο- is derived from the action suffix *-ti- inherited from Indo-European. In Greek, this suffix becomes -σι-. Thus, for example, the action noun ποιή-σι-ς ('do-ing') is related to the verbal stem of ποιέιν ('to do'), as it appears in Tenses other than Present and Past Imperfect: ποιήσω, έποίησα, etc. The corresponding verbal adjective is ποιη-τέος. Where a verb has σ before θ in First Aorist Passive, this σ appears before τ in the verbal adjective: έδράσθη, δραστέος. The accent is persistent on -ε-. The α of the feminine ending is long.

Verbal adjectives formed with a suffix -τέο- are listed separately in dictionaries. If only a Passive use of a particular verbal adjective occurs in extant classical Greek, the word is listed alphabetically in Liddell and Scott (1996) with the ending -τέος. If only an Active use occurs, the word is listed with the ending -τέον. Where both Passive and Active uses occur, the Active form is listed first in Montanari (2015), but there is some inconsistency in Liddell and Scott (1996) as to which form is listed first.

8.2. Usage of Verbal Adjectives Ending in -ΤΈΟΣ, -ΤΈα, -ΤΈον

The verbal adjectives ending in -τέος do not occur at all in Homer. They are in general use from the fifth century BCE onwards. (The earliest extant example is γεγωνητέον, *Pi.Ol.* 2.5, 476/5 BCE.) They denote the *necessity* of the action of the cognate verb.

When these verbal adjectives are used *personally*, they may appear in any gender (-τέος, -τέα, -τέον) and they have a *Passive* meaning, indicating that something is to be done. But they are more often used *impersonally*, mainly in the neuter singular (-τέον), but sometimes in the neuter plural (-τέα). The plural occurs especially in Thucydides among prose writers. The impersonal use regularly has an *Active* meaning, indicating that it is necessary to do something; and the verb ‘to be’ is usually omitted (‘<it is> necessary to do’). However, in reported discourse the Infinitive of the verb ‘to be’ may be included for the sake of clarity. And for an exceptional impersonal *Passive* usage, see §8.8 below.

The Agent for both personal and impersonal constructions is normally expressed in the Dative Case. Examples are given in §§8.3 and 8.4.1 below.

In both personal and impersonal constructions, the verbal adjective generally appears in the Nominative Case in direct discourse. In reported discourse, the verbal adjective regularly appears in the Accusative Case with Infinitive or Participle as appropriate. For a usage with the definite article in any Case, see §8.4.2 below.

In so far as these verbal adjectives regularly occur in statements (direct or reported), the negative used with them is οὐ. However, in the impersonal *Active* construction, οὐ ποιητέον means not ‘<It is> not necessary to do’, but ‘<It is> necessary not to do’. Although negative α is common as a prefix to verbal adjectives ending in -τός, -τή, -τόν, it appears as a prefix to verbal adjectives ending in -τέος, -τέα, -τέον only in some 11 forms cognate with verbs which contain the negative α. Alphabetically, the first and last examples are ἀδικητέον cognate with ἀδικεῖν (Plato) and ἀσιτητέον cognate with ἀσιτεῖν (Galen).

8.3. Impersonal Construction

In the following example, the relation of the form of the verbal adjective to the cognate verb is indicated by citing the verbal adjective itself, the Imperfect *Active* Infinitive and the Aorist *Passive* Infinitive.

ὥσθ’ ὁμοίως ἡμῖν **φιλονικητέον** ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐνθάδε ψηφισθησομένων, ὥσπερ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ὄπλοις ἀγώνων. (Isoc. 6.92.)

And so in a similar way <it is> necessary for us to campaign for what is going to be voted on here, just as for contests under arms.

φιλονικη-τέον

φιλονικεῖν

φιλονικη-θῆναι

ἡμῶν is Dative of Interest implying Agency: the ‘campaigning’ is to be done ‘by us’.

... καὶ ὡς ἤσθοντο τῶν λόγων, ἔδοξεν αὐτοῖς **παριτητέα** ἐς τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους **εἶναι** ... (Th. 1.72.1.)

... *and when they had heard the speeches, it seemed to them **to be necessary to appear** (lit. ‘to come forward’) before the Spartans ...*

The neuter plural verbal adjective παριτητέα is used here (in Thucydides); and the Infinitive εἶναι is included in the reported discourse. (ἰτητέον is equivalent to ἰτέον in function and meaning.)

8.4. Personal Construction

8.4.1. Regular Usage

ταῦτα μὲν οὖν, ὦ ἄνδρες δικασταί, τούτοις **ποιητέα ἦν** ... (And. 1.136.)

*Well then, O men of the jury, **this was (bound) to be done** by these <men> ...*

In the personal construction, ποιητέα is Nominative neuter plural in agreement with ταῦτα. τούτοις is Dative of Interest implying Agency.

8.4.2. Usage with Article

The personal usage of the verbal adjective occasionally appears with the definite article to form a noun phrase. This idiom is not restricted to the Nominative Case.

περὶ μὲν δὴ **τῶν** ὑμῖν **πρακτέων** καθ’ ὑμᾶς αὐτοὺς ὕστερον βουλευέσεσθε, ἂν σωφρονῆτε· (D. 6.28.)

*Indeed, concerning **what is to be done** by you, you will subsequently deliberate by yourselves, if you are sensible.*

8.5. Ambiguous Constructions

When the entire verbal adjectival phrase is neuter, it is often difficult to decide whether a neuter noun or pronoun is Subject of a personal construction or Object of an impersonal construction.

... ἡ ἄλλη Πελοπόννησος ἐς θροῦν καθίστατο ὡς καὶ σφίσι
ποιητέον τοῦτο ... (Th. 5.29.2.)

... *the rest of the Peloponnese was getting into a discussion, that <it was> **necessary** for them too **to do this** ... [OR: that **this** <was> **to be done** by them too ...]*

τοῦτο may be either Object of ποιητέον (used impersonally) or Subject of ποιητέον (used personally). But the absence of the verb 'to be' makes it more likely that the construction should be understood as impersonal here.

ἢ τοίνυν δεινότερόν **τι** τούτου **δέος εὔρετέον ἐστὶν** ἢ τόδε γε οὐδὲν ἐπίσχει ... (Th. 3.45.4.)

*Either, therefore, **some cause-of-fear** more fearsome than this [= death] **is to be found** or this [= cause-of-fear] **restrains nothing** ...*

[OR: *Either, therefore, **it is necessary to find some cause-of-fear** more fearsome than this or this causes no restraint ...]*

δέος may be either Subject of εὔρετέον (used personally) or Object of εὔρετέον (used impersonally). But the presence of ἐστὶν makes it more likely that the construction should be understood as personal here.

8.6. Agent in Accusative

Sometimes, the Agent of a verbal adjective appears in the Accusative Case instead of the Dative, apparently by analogy with δεῖ or χρή with the Accusative (and Infinitive).

οὐ μὴν **δουλευτέον τοὺς** νοῦν **ἔχοντας** τοῖς οὕτω κακῶς φρονοῦσιν ... (Isoc. 9.7.)

*<It is> certainly **necessary that those who have** sense (should) not **be subject** to people with so bad an attitude ...*

8.7. Construction Continued with Infinitive

The construction of verbal adjectives becomes more closely assimilated to the pattern of δεῖ or χρή, when an initial verbal adjective is followed by a second phrase with an Infinitive, which is dependent on the notion of necessity contained in the verbal adjective. In the following sentence, ποιητέον is continued by πείθειν.

... ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν πολέμῳ καὶ ἐν δικαστηρίῳ καὶ πανταχοῦ ποιητέον ἃ ἂν κελεύῃ ἡ πόλις καὶ ἡ πατρίς, ἢ πείθειν αὐτὴν ἢ τὸ δίκαιον πέφυκε ... (Pl.Cri. 51 B–C.)

... *but both in war and in law-court and everywhere <it is> necessary to do what the city and the fatherland commands, or to persuade it where justice lies ...*

8.8. Impersonal Passive Construction

Contrary to the usual practice, an impersonal construction with Passive meaning occurs with ἡσσητέα (neut. pl.). The cognate verb ἡσσᾶσθαι occurs only in the Middle/Passive in the classical period. The Genitive of Comparison, which is used with the verb and the verbal adjective, implies Agency: ‘to be inferior (compared with)’, ‘to be defeated (by)’.

κοῦτοι γυναικὸς οὐδαμῶς ἡσσητέα. (S.Ant. 678.)

And <it is> certainly necessary by no means to be defeated by a woman.

But the impersonal Passive construction is not limited to verbal adjectives cognate with verbs which are used only in the Passive Voice. In the following quotation, ἀπολειπτέον illustrates the point.

ἄρά γε, ὦ γύναι, διὰ τοιαύτας τινὰς προνοίας καὶ τῆς ἐν τῷ σμήνῃ ἡγεμόνος αἱ μέλιτται οὕτω διατίθενται πρὸς αὐτήν, ὥστε, ὅταν ἐκεῖνη ἐκλίπῃ, οὐδεμία οἶεται τῶν μελιττῶν ἀπολειπτέον εἶναι, ἀλλ’ ἔπονται πᾶσαι; (X.Oec. 7.38.)

(Is it), O wife, on account of some such caring-actions even of the leader in the hive (that) the bees are so disposed towards her, that, when she quits <the hive>, none of the bees thinks that it is necessary to be left behind, but they all follow?

References

Goodwin (1889), *Syntax of the moods and tenses of the Greek verb*, §§920–926.

Palmer (1980), *The Greek language*, pp. 257, 314.

Smyth (1956), *Greek grammar*, §§358, 425.c, 471, 1003.a, 1052, 1488, 2149–2152.

EXERCISE 8

1. Translate the following passages.
2. For each passage:
 - a. write down, in the form in which they appear, any verbal adjectives of the type whose Nominative singular ends in $-\tauέος$, $-\τέα$, $-\τέον$
 - b. write the Imperfect Infinitive of the verb to which each of these adjectives is related
 - c. state whether the particular use is personal Passive or impersonal Active
 - d. if the construction appears to be ambiguous, indicate whether there are grounds for preferring an Active or Passive interpretation
 - e. mark accents correctly.
3. Montanari (2015), *The Brill dictionary of Ancient Greek*, or the full edition of Liddell and Scott (1996), *A Greek–English lexicon*, should be used.

Example

κωλυτέον δὲ τοὺς ὑβρίζειν βουλομένους ... (X.Hier. 8.9.)

and <it is> necessary to prevent those wanting to act violently ...

κωλυτέον related to κωλύειν. Impersonal Active.

1. περὶ γὰρ τῶν αὐτῶν οὐχ ὁμοίως ἅπασι βουλευτέον, ἀλλ' ὡς ἂν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἕκαστοι τοῦ βίου ποιήσονται τὴν ὑπόθεσιν.

τῶν αὐτῶν	neut.
ὡς ἂν	Introduces a clause of indefinite comparison.
ἕκαστοι (pl.)	<i>each group</i>
ὑπόθεσις, -εως, ἡ	<i>basis (qualified by τοῦ βίου)</i>

2. ... καίπερ τοσοῦτον πλεονεκτούσης τῆς ποιήσεως, οὐκ ὀκνητέον, ἀλλ' ἀποπειρατέον τῶν λόγων ἐστὶν ...

πλεονεκτεῖν	<i>to have an advantage</i>
ποίησις, -εως, ἡ	<i>poetry</i>
οἱ λόγοι	<i>prose (lit. the words)</i>

3. ... ὑμᾶς δὲ ὁσίως ὄραν προσήκει τὰ πραχθέντα· ἐκ τῶν λεγομένων γὰρ ἡ ἀλήθεια σκεπτέα αὐτῶν ἐστὶν.

ὁσίως	<i>conscientiously</i>
προσήκειν	<i>to be appropriate (here with Acc. and Infin.)</i>
ἐκ	<i>on the basis of</i>
λεγομένων	neut. Pass.
αὐτῶν (neut.)	Refers to τὰ πραχθέντα.

4. ἀλλὰ σὺ πρῶτον μὲν ἡγή παρασκευαστέον τὸ μή ποτε κινδυνεῦσαι;

ἡγεῖσθαι (Mid.)	<i>to think</i>
κινδυνεύειν	<i>to run a risk, to be in danger</i>

5. πρῶτον μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἀθυμητέον, ὧ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τοῖς παροῦσι πράγμασιν ...

6. ἄλλου λόγου μέμνησθε, τόνδε δ' οὐδαμῶς
καιρὸς γεγωνεῖν, ἀλλὰ συγκαλυπτέος
ὅσον μάλιστα.

λόγος, -ου, ὁ	<i>subject, topic</i>
μεμνήσθαι (Mid.)	<i>to make mention of (+ Gen.; Perf. with Imperf. meaning; here Impv.)</i>
τόνδε	Understand λόγον.
γεγωνεῖν	<i>to declare</i>
ὅσον μάλιστα	<i>so far as possible</i>

7. καὶ τῶν μὲν πλεόνων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ αἰ γινῶμαι ἔφερον, ...
πολεμητέα εἶναι ἐν τάχει·

φέρειν (Intr.)	<i>to tend (to), to incline (to)</i>
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8. ... ἐκεῖνο μάλιστα φυλακτέον, ὅπως μηδὲν ἀνάνδρως
φανησόμεθα διαπραττόμενοι μηδὲ συγχωροῦντες τοῖς
πολεμίοις παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον.

φαίνεσθαι (Pass. + Partc.)	<i>to be clear(ly doing something)</i>
διαπράττειν (Act. and Mid.)	<i>to manage</i>
συγχωρεῖν	<i>to yield (to) (+ Dat.)</i>
παρὰ (+ Acc.)	<i>contrary to</i>

This text is taken from *Intermediate Ancient Greek Language*,
by Darryl Palmer, published 2021 by ANU Press, The Australian
National University, Canberra, Australia.